

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6266

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR,CF,CG
SUBJECT: TRIP BY KINSHASA EMBASSY OFFICERS TO BRAZZAVILLE

1. EMBASSY OFFICERS WILLIAM MASHBURN AND DAVID MATHEWSON VISITED BRAZZAVILLE JULY 20, 1976, AND RETURNED WITHOUT INCIDENT THE AFTERNOON OF JULY 21. PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO EXAMINE DEPARTMENT PROPERTIES IN BRAZZAVILLE. MASHBURN WILL PROVIDE HIS REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE PROPERTIES, TOGETHER WITH HIS RECOMMENDATIONS, UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK.
 2. MASHBURN AND MATHEWSON HAD NO TROUBLE IN ENTERING THE CONGO. FRG EMBASSY IN BRAZZAVILLE OBTAINED APPROPRIATE CLEARANCES AND ACCOMPANIED EMBOFFS ON THEIR VISITS TO THE DIFFERENT PROPERTIES. EMBOFFS HAD NO RPT NO CONTACTS WITH CONGOLESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.
 3. EMBOFFS DESCRIBED THE MOOD IN BRAZZAVILLE AS CALM AND WERE IMPRESSED BY APPARENT RELAXED ATMOSPHERE IN THE CITY. STORES WERE REASONABLY WELL STOCKED WITH GOODS ALTHOUGH PRICES WERE HIGH.
 4. THE FRG AMBASSADOR TOLD EMBOFFS IT WAS HIS OPINION, BASED ON CONTACTS WITH CONGOLESE OFFICIALS, THAT DESPITE THEIR CURRENT CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH BLOC COUNTRIES THE CONGOLESE HAVE NO DESIRE TO CUT OFF ALL RELATIONS WITH THE WEST. HE BELIEVES THAT THE CONGOLESE ARE AFRAID OF BECOMING TOO DEPENDENT ON THE
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BLOC FOR ECONOMIC AID, TRADE, ETC., AND THAT THIS CONCERN

HAS BECOME MORE PRONOUNCED SINCE THE ANGOLAN WAR. HE THINKS THE CONGOLESE FEEL THEY HAVE RECEIVED PITIFULLY LITTLE IN THE WAY OF REWARDS FOR THEIR COOPERATION WITH THE SOVIETS, CUBANS, AND ANGOLANS, AND THAT THIS HAS SERVED TO SOUR THE CONGOLESE SOMEWHAT ON COOPERATION WITH THE BLOC COUNTRIES.

5. IT WAS THE FRG AMBASSADOR'S OPINION THAT THE SOCIALIST RHETORIC PUT FORTH BY THE CONGOLESE MEDIA SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY; THAT THE CONGOLESE LEADERSHIP IN NOT AS RADICAL AS ITS PROPAGANDA WOULD LEAD ONE TO BELIEVE.

6. FRG AMBASSADOR BELIEVES THE CONGOLESE SUFFER FROM AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX VIS-A-VIS ZAIRE. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY FEEL SLIGHTED BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER OF HIGH-LEVEL FOREIGN DIGNITARIES WHO VISIT ZAIRE BUT NOT THE CONGO. THE CONGOLESE APPARENTLY FEEL PARTICULARLY OFFENDED BY FACT THAT EVEN THEIR "SOCIALIST ALLIES" HAVE SEEN FIT TO SEND ONLY SECOND OR THIRD LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES ON NUMBER OF OFFICIAL VISITS TO BRAZZAVILLE.
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